1: Nimuendaju E-5 (1929-1936) 1946 SOS Timbira SOS

The catcher next ran to the house of the western pepyé girl, led her out, took her to the plaza, and then brought her back to her home; he followed the same procedure with the eastern girl. Then he brought into seclusion the deputy commandant and finally the two errand boys.

Not until the following morning, when the age classes had assumed their appropriate stations in the plaza, did the council designate the chief commandant, whom the catcher seized and, as with the others, led to a bedstead in his mother's home. To date the pepyé, exclusive of the catcher, numbered thirty-eight.

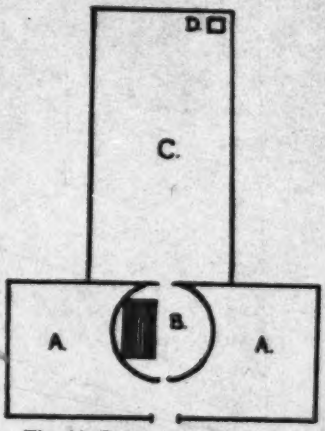

Fig. 13. Pepyé internment. A, living rooms; B, seclusion hut; C, yard; D, latrine.

Internment cells; life in seclusion.—The following morning the men in the plaza grouped themselves according to menkąčą, that is, by the dichotomy of the six plaza divisions (p. 87). Each group was to prepare the retreat for members who were pepyé.

As stated, all pepyé were interned in their maternal homes except for the eastern leader (p. 182). In each house a beehive-shaped hut (ikrére), about 3 m. in diameter and 2 m. high, was put up directly at the rear wall (fig. 13; pl. 34). This cell (fig. 13, *b*) had an anterior door barely 30 cm. in height and closed by a mat from within. The furniture was limited to a bedstead ½-m. high and one or two mats. Behind this cell and the rear wall of the house was a courtyard, kwęk, 5 by 10 m., fenced off to a considerable height with poles and anajá palm fronds. A tiny opening, barely sufficing for the interne to crawl through, connected yard and cell. In one of the outermost nooks of the yard was the latrine (ikwǰrčą)—a pit ¾-m. in depth, covered except for a slit with billets of wood, a mat laid across the slit completing the closure.

As soon as the preparations were completed every pepyé exchanged his resting place on the bedstead of his mother's house for the cell, which was occupied singly or by more individuals, according to the number of pepyé in each house. In Hąktokót's wife's house four persons were interned, including one of the girls.

Henceforth the pepyé remained invisible to their fellow villagers, staying in their cells from April 22 until June 14. They were as inactive as possible. Twice every day, at least, their kinswomen slipped ample food through the miniature front door of the cell. For the time being they were not allowed to bathe or to kindle a fire, though the nights happened to be rather cold then; they were to make shift with a minimum of sleep, were to be neither seen nor heard by anyone; their hair was not cut, and their bodies remained unpainted. They were forbidden to scratch themselves with their fingernails, substituting neatly carved rods (amnyikarẽ'nčą) of miniature sword-club shape, which they usually carried behind their ears (pl. 35, *b*).

Only fellow novices—and even then only clandestinely at night—may enter a pepyé's cell. There is only one exception: since all intercourse with the outside world is effected through the errand boys, these have free access at all hours both to the cells and to the sitting rooms of the house. This statement at least defines the ideal conduct, to which many pepyé rigidly conformed, though others were guilty of frequent transgressions.